



# Uniquely Scotlands Top 5 Scottish Rail Journeys



## 1. West Highland Line

*(Glasgow – Mallaig)*

*One of the most famous rail journeys in the world, the West Highland Line, is a spectacular way to embrace the West Highlands of Scotland. Beginning in Glasgow, you board the train and travel parallel with the River Clyde before heading North, passing by Loch Lomond (UK's largest loch by surface area). You will then arrive in Crainlarich, where you can change trains and head West to Oban, passing by locations such as Ben Cruachan and Loch Awe (UK's longest loch) before arriving in the beautiful coastal town of Oban. That's where the line stops and after a nights' stay, you will head back for Crainlarich for another change and to continue the journey North. This stretch of the journey will take you through Rannoch Moor, one of the last remaining wildernesses in Europe. This beautiful area is an expanse of around 50 square miles of boggy moorland which is a designated 'Site of Special Scientific Interest'*



and a 'Special Area Of Conservation'. It was also used as a filming location for 'Trainspotting', 'Harry Potter' and 'Outlander' which was filmed in the nearby village of Kinloch Rannoch. Once you have passed through the Moor, you make your way South to Fort William where you can marvel at the UK's tallest mountain, Ben Nevis. The last stretch of the journey from Fort William to Mallaig can be done on 'The Jacobite' which is a steam locomotive. This journey is a spectacular one, you not only get spectacular scenery, but you get to cross the Glenfinnan Viaduct, made famous by the Harry Potter films. At this point, you can look out to Loch Shiel, which they used for the Hogwart's Lake. Glenfinnan is also a famous historical area in Scotland as it was the location that Prince Charles Edward Stuart otherwise known as 'Bonnie Prince Charlie' rose the Jacobite standard to begin the 1745 Jacobite uprising. After Glenfinnan, you will pass by Loch Eilt, another Harry Potter filming location, used for Dumbledore's resting place. Before arriving in Mallaig, you will pass by Camusdarach Beach and Loch Morar (UK's deepest loch).

## 2. Kyle Line

*(Inverness – Kyle of Lochalsh)*

Whichever way you experience the Kyle Line, whether it be Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh or vice versa, it is simply unforgettable. The journey will take you through a number of picturesque villages and hamlets in the rolling agricultural lands before heading into the dramatic landscapes of the West Highlands. Witness the jagged peaks, dense forests, and glistening lochs as this rail line takes you West. You will see the marshlands surrounding Loch Achanalt, which like Rannoch Moor, are declared as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. You will pass through Plockton, a filming location for *The Wickerman* and *Hamish McBeth*. The unusual climate in Plockton allows the growth of palm trees! Once you arrive in Kyle of Lochalsh, you can continue on to the mystical Isle of Skye.

## 3. Highland Main Line

*(Edinburgh/ Glasgow – Inverness)*

Starting in either Edinburgh or Glasgow and heading to Inverness is one of the most spectacular rail lines in terms of dramatic landscapes. If you are leaving from Edinburgh, you'll cross over the iconic Forth Rail Bridge into the Kingdom of Fife and on to Perth. If you are departing from Glasgow, you will pass through the historic town of Stirling and get a view of the famous National Wallace Monument. You will then pass through Dunblane, one of the oldest settlements in Scotland, dating back to the late 6<sup>th</sup> Century and then on to Perth. Regardless where you began, from Perth there is only one route – North! As you head through the 'Big Tree Country' up to the Cairngorm National Park, you will pass by Dunkeld, Pitlochry and also Killiecrankie, the location of the 1689 Jacobite uprising and 'The Soldier's Leap'. As you make your way up the edge of the Cairngorms, you'll have a trip over the



*Dummochter Summit, one of the highest mountain passes in the UK. Take in the spectacular rolling mountains and try to spot Ben Macdui, the UK's second largest mountain and home to the mystical 'Grey Man of Ben Macdui'. One of the last stops before arriving in Inverness is Aviemore, one of Scotland's most famous Skiing locations.*

## 4. East Coast Line

*(Edinburgh – Aberdeen)*

*Another train line that will take you over the iconic Forth Rail Bridge is the East coast line from Edinburgh to Aberdeen. This time, instead of travelling to Perth, you will continue through Fife, passing by Leuchars (closest train station to St. Andrews) and then over the Tay Bridge to Dundee. From Dundee, the route continues up the picturesque East coast, passing by Arbroath where 'The Declaration of Arbroath' was signed to assert the independence of Scotland, denouncing the English attempts to subjugate it. As the railway follows the coastline, you will see picturesque fishing villages and the occasional beach such as Lunan Bay and Stonehaven Beach. You may even get a brief view of Dunottar Castle, near Stonehave, before eventually arriving in 'The Granite City' of Aberdeen.*

## 5. Far North Line

*(Inverness – Wick/ Thurso)*

*The only train line running North from Inverness is the 'Far North Line'. After leaving Inverness, you will first head West along the Beaully Firth to Beaully before following the route North. As you head North, the next expanse of water you will see is the Cromarty Firth, where you may spot a dolphin or two, if you're lucky! The route then heads inland for a brief spell to pass round the Dornoch Firth before re-joining the coastline at Golspie. After following the coastline for a while, the route will take you back inland and up to Thurso, the surf capital of Scotland on the North Coast before heading South-East to Wick.*